Support communities in your local area

Encourage the public library network to support, share and engage with Indigenous peoples in their local area

Targets

- Libraries develop new approaches to attract key Indigenous community organisations.
- Increase outreach activities to Indigenous communities.
- Develop relationships with key Indigenous community organisations at a local level.

Key strategies

- Encourage public libraries to liaise with the local Indigenous groups and associations regarding shared aspirations and programs — for example, Reconciliation groups and Land Councils.
- Support libraries to explore collaborations with their local council and other organisations involved with Indigenous peoples in the community.
- Work collaboratively with public libraries to promote opportunities for their staff to engage with local community groups to build long lasting relationships.
KAYLA SANDS AND ZAHLIA GREEN, DURING A VISIT TO THE STATE LIBRARY OF WALGETT’S DHARRIWAA ELDERS GROUP AS PART OF ITS ELDERS TEACH FAMILY PROGRAM.

Public Library Resources

- ADVISORY COMMITTEES
- OUTREACH

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Getting started

The establishment of an Aboriginal Advisory Committee can be a more formal way to bring people together to seek advice and direction. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Information Resource Network (ATSILIRN) Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services [1] recommend the inclusion of Aboriginal people in Library governance and management. The Protocols note that:

“Libraries, archives and information services which serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and/or hold materials with Aboriginal and Torres Strait content or perspectives should ensure the involvement and participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in governance, management and operation. Are encouraged to:

1.1 Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the traditional owners and custodians of Australia.”
1.2 Ensure appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership of governing and advisory bodies including boards, councils and committees.

1.3 Ensure meaningful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in effective development, adoption and implementation of relevant policies.

1.4 Develop mechanisms to ensure effective monitoring and review of policy implementation.

1.5 Facilitate organisational change to accommodate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

Tip

If your library would like to establish an Aboriginal Advisory Board, we recommend that you establish clear Terms of Reference for the Board to work towards. For example, they could provide advice on developing collections, or advice on building priorities around Indigenous employment or focussed events. You could also consult an Advisory Board to give advice on dual naming of rooms or signage in local language.

Working with communities

- Identify local Elders Groups or existing Aboriginal Advisory Boards in your area. Make contact with them and see if they are happy to work with the library or be consulted on the development of programs and services
- Consult the 'Collaborate NSW' Strategic Planning Checklist [2] for engaging with Aboriginal communities.

OUTREACH

Getting started

An effective way for libraries to connect with Indigenous peoples is to organise community-based events and programs. The State Library’s Mobile & Outreach Services NSW Public Libraries: practice, standards and guidelines [3] report explores mobile and outreach services that are currently offered by NSW public libraries. The report outlines the strengths, weaknesses, benefits, opportunities and best practice guidelines for different outreach models. The report is a handy resource for assessing the viability of particular outreach services in your area.

Some examples of outreach activities and services that might be useful to your local Aboriginal community are:

- Pop-up libraries - bringing the library and its collections to the community
- Deposit stations - placing a small selection of books in an alternative location in the community, such as doctor’s waiting rooms, residential care homes, community centres, family centres and hospitals
- Stalls at important events, such as a NAIDOC Week celebration or football grand final
- Partnerships with community groups (for example Elders groups and youth centres) to deliver on-site programs
- Aboriginal Keeping Places or Gallery for deposit station

Working with communities

- Make connections within the local community to see if there are places where a pop-up library, deposit station, stall or other outreach activity might be effective
- Identify specific events, for example during NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week or Indigenous Literacy Day, where you can take your outreach services and activities.
Case Studies

- KEMPSEY LIBRARY
Kinchela Boys Home 90th Anniversary exhibition - Campsie library.

The library’s success in delivering programs and events to our Aboriginal community is due to the passion and commitment of senior staff (Ruth Waite and myself). You have to have the fire in the belly and care about being a centre for cultural knowledge and awareness. The Macleay Valley like many areas across the state have a history of frontier wars, massacres and the legacy of the Stolen Generations.

The library has a diverse range of partners in the community which encourages and allows our participation in events for our Aboriginal Community.

**Key partners**

Dunghutti Elders

Educational community, particularly Greenhill Public School and Bellbrook Public School.

AECG – Aboriginal Education Consultative Group: our designated Aboriginal team member, Ruth Waite attends these meetings regularly.

State Library

State Records

Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation – Tiffany McComsey (Strategic Development officer).

**Major Exhibitions and Events to support Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and Recognition**

“In Living Memory” NSW Tour – for those of us directly involved, co-ordinating the event and assisting State Records staff for the event was a career highlight.

“No Names, Just numbers” May 2013 - partnership with Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation.

“90th Anniversary Commemoration Kinchela Boys Home” – October 2014.

“Freedom Ride” exhibition which included original photographs from the archives of the Macleay Argus - 2011.

NAIDOC – participation: events in the library and sessions at the Wigay Aboriginal Cultural Food Park.


**Focus on the Aboriginal community**

NAIDOC WEEK - July 2015, the library participated in NAIDOC Week programs to support the local Indigenous community. The library’s participation promoted the programs and resources it offers to the Indigenous community.

“Macleay Small Schools – NAIDOC Festival” - the library staff participated in programs for primary aged children at this gathering promoting the literacy programs the library offers to parents and children. The library’s replacement MOBILE VAN was part of the program and had recently been fitted with vinyl artwork/skins.
“Ngabu Bingayi Aboriginal Corporation” - the launch of the Dhanggati Language group resource books for children was a focus for the community during NAIDOC Week.

“Aboriginal Family History” workshops.

“Wigay Aboriginal Cultural Food Park” – the library staff deliver culturally appropriate programs and story sessions for children during NAIDOC Week. The staff liaise with the Wigay Park committee and members of the Elders group to deliver the programs. The event is held annually and is a partnership between the library and the Aboriginal community which is building momentum each year.

“Indigenous Digital Keeping Places” pilot project initiated by the Indigenous Services Branch at the State Library of NSW. The library participated in this pilot which involved the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation, Dunghutti Elders Aboriginal Corporation and Kirsten Thorpe, Manager Indigenous Services, SLNSW. Kempsey Library participated in the information gathering forum with the men from Kinchela Boys Home to support the initiative and consult with State Library staff on the library’s future role in digital collections.

2016 - 2017

NAIDOC WEEK - 120 people in attendance at the library’s NAIDOC event. The program included a primary school choir singing in language, traditional craft and Aboriginal stories with the participation of the local Elders group. The library provided screening of the recently completed project, “Dunghutti Stories from Yesterday.” The program for the day was a great success with the participation of various agencies engaged with the project.

The library ran a Saturday program for the children at the “Wigay Aboriginal Cultural Food Park” as part of the NAIDOC events.

Indigenous Records Workshops – Aboriginal Family History Workshops

Focus on state and national institutions which hold Aboriginal records and the accessibility of these records.

Choose your strategy objective

Overview

[5]
Welcome
Support communities in your local area

Published on State Library of NSW (https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au)

Include

[8]

[9]

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- [9]

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**Build**

[10]
Reach

[12]
Other resources for your library

Download Resources

[13]
Support communities in your local area
Published on State Library of NSW (https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au)

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Support communities in your local area

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![Diagram showing various strategies for supporting Indigenous communities in library networks]


Links